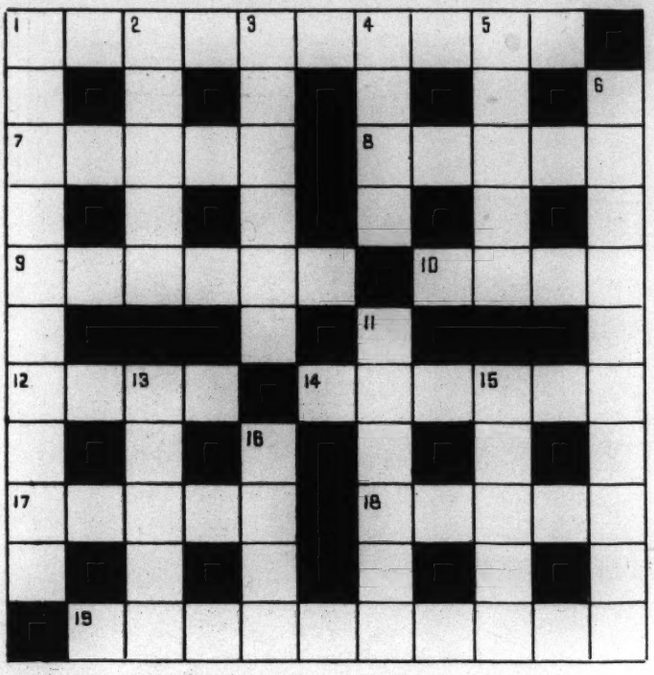
Film Monthly Review

No. 3 MARCH, 1949 PRICE NINEPENCE

FILM CROSSWORD No. 15

SOLUTION NEXT MONTH

Solution to Crossword No. 14 at foot of column



CLUES ACROSS AND DOWN

1. Cat-loving cynic, now in Hollywood (5, 5).
1. Down.—She made her film debut in "Nicholas Nickleby" (4, 6).
2. Dolores Del Rio played in this Portrait (5).
3. Helen Haye usually plays this type of lady (6).
4. Muriel was in "Another Shore" (4).
5. Take this girl's name from the screen's great Shakespearean actor (5).
6. Star of "Frenzy" (10).
7. Most films about spivs are usually this (5).
8. First name of a great Muni characterisation (5).
9. Bat yet and make this Canadian actor (6).
10. County of Jean ? (4).
11. Rex Harrison and Robert Taylor have both appeared in this name of two different films (6).
12. Great British director (4).
13. Lillian Gish appeared as this Miss Laurie (5).
14. Set her for Miss Waters (6).
15. A Shirley Temple film (5).
16. Star of "Black Narcissus" (4).
17. In films, prospectors usually fight for this amount of gold dust (5).
18. An early Lockwood film (5).
19. He directed "The Shop at Sly Corner" (6, 4).

CLUES ACROSS.—1, Vivien Leigh. 7, Salew. 8, Sudan. 9, All. 10, Enter. 11, Ivan. 12, Die. 14, Chum. 16, Dodie. 19, Yew. 20, Oates. 21, Years. 22, Selena Royle.

CLUES DOWN.—1, Vessel. 2, Valet. 3, Edward, My Son. 4, Leslie Dwyer. 5, India. 6, Hand. 13, Tessie. 15, Hotel. 17, Diary. 18, Boss.

EUROPEAN FILM REVIEW

THIS publication, printed in Switzerland, is something entirely new in the field of film journalism ; with over 80 pages and nearly as many illustrations, it can only be sent to you on a subscription basis. Copies will be sent to all who mail or have mailed 2s. 7d., which includes cost of postage.

★

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PRECINCT PUBLICATIONS

50 Old Brompton Road

LONDON S.W.7

Film Monthly Review

MARCH, 1949 Vol. 7, No. 3

EDITORIAL

WE are devoting our editorial space to this message—primarily addressed to British producers and distributors—from John Boulting:

"I would say quite frankly, certainly so far as the distribution and production sides are concerned, that we are carrying far too many passengers—people drawing very large salaries for doing virtually nothing. I would say that there are too many banquets, too many champagne-soaked conventions, too many luxurious offices, too many ornate brochures, too much tasteless advertising, and too much undiluted, unprofitable and unproductive nonsense.

"Our industry can be compared with a favourite tree in our orchard. It has been standing for a long while and has yielded a bountiful crop of fruit. If it is to yield for the future on anything like the same scale, it has got to be pruned. And when I say pruned I don't mean that we should throw out of our studios workmen earning between six and eight pounds a week, or throw out of our renting offices ledger clerks and office boys. We must take the ladder and first prune at the top. If we are to expect the ordinary worker and technician to engage himself upon terms that are economic, we on our side must be prepared to live more moderately. Films are not born—nor are they made—at Claridge's and the Savoy. We must win the confidence of all those engaged in production, and of those able to finance production, by behaving and living in a manner consonant with our sense of duty and compatible with the needs of our great industry and our great country."

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This month's cover picture:
Jean Simmons and Donald Houston.

Edited by Robert Hirst

Your Influence is Needed!

by

R. W. DICKINSON, M.A.

(Deputy Director, The British Film Institute)

THE Film Society movement in this country is now some 60,000 strong, split up among nearly 200 societies. It is also spreading throughout the Commonwealth and already societies exist in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Rhodesia, Kenya, Ceylon, India and Singapore.

The startling growth of this movement, the vanguard of a campaign for better films, has been mainly due to the work of the British Film Institute. But what *is* the British Film Institute and what does it do?

Original Aims of Institute

The British Film Institute started in 1933 as a result of the recommendations of the Commission on the Film in National Life. Its original aims and objects were "to encourage the use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction"—fairly wide terms of reference when one considers that its only income up to the end of the war was about £10,000 a year out of the Sunday Cinematograph Fund administered by the Privy Council.

However, although severely hampered by lack of money, in the first fourteen years of its existence the Institute managed to—

Establish and build up the National Film Library into the largest film archive in the world, with over fifteen million feet of film of priceless historical interest kept under modern and constantly improving scientific conditions of storage;

Build up the Film Societies from practically nothing to a movement 60,000 strong, the vanguard of the campaign for better films, and encourage that movement to spread throughout the Commonwealth;

Establish an Information Service on films second to none in the world which is constantly being consulted by Governments, newspapers and individuals to the tune of some 4,000 questions a year;

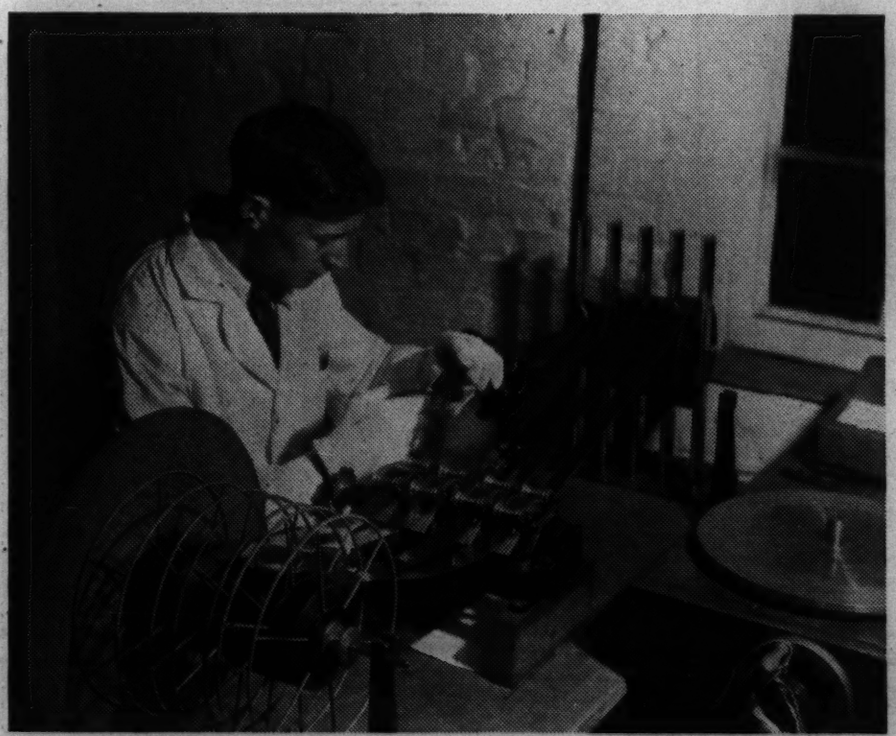
Put visual education "on the map" in the schools of England by a vigorous campaign of Summer Schools, lectures, pamphlets, demonstrations and exhibitions;

Issue publications, including monthly and quarterly journals which attracted wide interest.

Treasury Grant

At this point, struck by the Institute's increasing activity, the Government took a hand by agreeing to a great expansion of the Institute's work and a direct Treasury grant to carry it out. The "new" British Film Institute was officially constituted on November 8th last year.

Under its new terms of reference the Institute, in addition to the work it is already doing, will become the focus of all those, whether bodies or individuals, who are genuinely interested in, and anxious to work for, better films and a rising standard of public taste. It will also have available a certain amount of money to assist and set up specialised bodies working in its field and will explore and promote new and extended uses of the film.



National Film Library storage vaults at Aston Clinton. Editing a film on the 4-way synchroniser.

Where *You* Come In

This is where you come in—where *your* influence is needed. As a reader of "Film Monthly Review" you are intelligently interested in cinema. Well, then, are you a member of your local film society or, if there is not one in your district, have you thought of founding one? If you don't know how to go about it, write to us and we will help you.

Secondly, the influence of the Institute will grow in direct proportion to the number of its members. Don't just be one of the herd—help to focus public opinion by joining us. (Incidentally, your two guineas a year will bring you quite a number of material advantages, including membership of the largest lending library of books on cinema in the world.)

There it is. The cinema is a new and growing art form with incalculable possibilities for good and evil. *Your* influence is needed to help to mould it.

The Factory End of Films

The well-known author of "A Film in the Making" enlightens us about the work of the film laboratories.

by JOHN W. COLLIER

HOW would you like to spend hours watching films that appear on the screen upside down? Or perhaps watch two films showing simultaneously and at a speed fifty per cent. higher than the normal rate? Believe it or not, this is the practice of some sorely-tried individuals in the film industry. It is almost literally a nightmare, for much of it takes place at night and is part of the process that goes on between the shooting of scenes and subsequent showing of the "rushes" on the following day.

These and other mysterious happenings are features of the work in laboratories processing the films that we see. And it is an involved series of operations that has to be done at speed. In some respects conditions are ideal, but they do, however, impose a severe strain on the operatives.

Technicians Like Midwives!

A film laboratory is an elaborate plant with the atmosphere of a clinic, a pre-natal clinic and a register office combined: appropriately so, since the technicians employed there are, in fact, like midwives to the creations of the studios. The air is conditioned to defeat the main enemy, dust, and everyone and everything is kept spotlessly clean.

There is a labyrinth of little rooms, mostly lit either by small red or green lamps. Only trained operatives, used to working in such dim light, could possibly see to make skilled manipulations with sensitive film strip to which light means obliteration. Some of the rooms are in darkness, except for the beam from a projector: these are bijou cinemas with miniature screens. The operative viewing films upside down (the films, not the operative) is in one of them. The reason for this procedure, or for seeing two films at once and at an enhanced speed, is in order that the quality of the prints may be checked without the viewer being distracted by the subject matter.

Own Artesian Well

Elsewhere in the building there will be huge vats of chemicals, all mixed with distilled water and presided over by chemists and their assistants who keep a careful check upon the purity and strength of the solutions in use. In one large laboratory they have their own Artesian well to ensure supplies, as well as their own generating plant and other self-contained services. The process of developing and printing film strip is basically the same as that employed by the merest amateur photographer, but the scale of it, the mechanisation and control, make it almost unrecognisable.

The film that comes from the studio is a negative and the first job of the laboratory is to make a positive print for use in the studio so that the production unit may check up daily on the results of their work. Out of perhaps six or seven "takes" only one will be selected by the director for printing, probably with another marked as a reserve. The selected shot is printed according to studio instructions, but the result is checked by a special "contact man" at the laboratory whose job it is to notify the studio if there is any obvious fault in the chosen print. This is an early-morning job which allows time for revised instructions from the studio and for delivery of the positive print in time for the scheduled showing of the "rushes." This form of checking is important since, if none of the shots prove satisfactory, the scene may have to be shot again before the set is dismantled. This daily check on results goes on throughout the period of shooting.

Elaborate Filing System

During the day at the laboratories an elaborate filing and indexing system is brought into operation. Each piece of negative film stock is marked on the edge with a progressive code number, and by indexing this against the film sequence number it is possible to trace any section of the film that may be required.

Actually the laboratory staff are dealing with two strips of film: one for the visual images or "action" as it is called, and one for sound. The two strips are treated separately but similarly until the time comes for marrying up the two negative strips —action and sound, and producing a master positive.

This end of the production of a film involves a great number of intricate processes and they are all important in their effect on the finished product. The negatives are graded according to the density required so that the visual image has a rhythm in depth as well as in other features. Synchronisation of sound and action has to be assured. Titling and introductions are the work of the laboratories. Montage, mixes and dissolves have to be effected to the film editor's design. Master negatives, master positives and positive copies have to be made. Tricks that used to require much ingenuity on the floor of the studio are now the product of optical machines in the laboratory.

Varying Projection Conditions

Some copies of the film are made for special purposes. For instance, it is not generally realised that projection conditions in cinemas vary greatly. It is not possible to print a special copy to suit the conditions in

Reviewing the Films

EUREKA STOCKADE

THIS Michael Balcon production tells the story of the 1853 gold-rush to Australia; here, we see the gold-diggers' struggle—against the enemy outside, and against the disrupting forces within their own ranks. We see their undisciplined courage, and we see their vain attempt in battle against the Government troops. We really see and *feel* all these things. For here is truth; and that is why this film succeeds. Chips Rafferty, however, is more successful as the commander of the gold-diggers than he is as the schoolmistress's future husband. Good performances from Ralph Truman and Sydney Loder.

RACHEL AND THE STRANGER

A widowed farmer purchases a bondwoman, Rachel, from the nearest village, as his wife. The inevitable conflict between them is aggravated by the farmer's young son who strongly resents his stepmother. However, all is eventually straightened out by the interference of a nomadic hunter and by the immediate danger of the attacking Indians. The story is certainly no better than it sounds, but the film does contain some good acting — especially from Robert Mitchum. Unfortunately, it also contains an incredibly stupid battle between hoards of Indians and the defenders—three—of the cabin; needless to say, the Indians are decisively beaten.

THE PASSIONATE FRIENDS

A film that claims to tell the story of "a woman's conflict between love and security." Now this is a very good intention; but unfortunately, it is never fulfilled. There are two serious handicaps. First, the contrast between Claude Rains, as the husband, and Trevor Howard, as the lover. Howard displays a cool, detached, rational approach to all matters concerning love and indeed life itself. He is, in fact, everything but passionate. Claude Rains, on the other hand, is the very quintessence of tenderness, dependence and irrationality. It is he, the husband, who has the supposed attributes of the lover!

The other handicap is the continual oscillation between past and present. The director, David Lean, should have known that this only makes for confusion on the part of the audience. It is all a pity because this could well have been a fine picture.

B.N.

RESIGNATION OF OLIVER BELL

Consequent on the reorganisation of the British Film Institute, now taking place, Mr. Oliver Bell tendered his resignation as Director. The Governors accepted the resignation and expressed to him their thanks for past services.

AN AMERICAN ON HOLIDAY (La Continentale)

This Luigi Zampa film of two G.I.s spending a week's leave in Rome is in the best Italian tradition; the beautiful blending of tears and laughter, of love and destruction, of gentle goodness, and of tawdry vice —for these qualities, once again we have to look to the Italians. For in this film we see the sum of all human emotions, of all human actions. In this unpretentious little comedy there is a bitter-sweet fullness so seldom found in the expensive present-day British and American films. I doubt whether I have ever seen anything more poignant in the cinema than the love scenes between Leo Dale (the G.I.) and Valentina Cortese, the village schoolteacher in Rome on an important mission. The acting of all the artists is excellent.

This picture is an exquisite whole; on no account should it be missed.

The Factory End of Films

(*continued*).

each cinema, but it is practicable to ensure that the copy shown at Press and Trade exhibitions is adjusted to suit the conditions of the particular cinema to be used. How necessary such allowance may be is shown by the fact that even in the big cinemas of the West End of London the available light may vary from ten to eighteen foot candles. These initial showings can, as we have seen, be controlled, but the lack of standardisation in projector equipment does account for some of the poor exhibitions that we sometimes suffer in suburban and provincial cinemas, in spite of the best that the laboratories may do.

Going through the nests of little cinemas and workshops of a film laboratory the layman is continually provoked to wonder. Here are dozens of snippets of films that are yet to come: little bits of a giant jigsaw seen in isolation, viewed and viewed again by girls who might be usherettes but who are trained to detect and record flaws. (One wonders about their reactions if and when they visit the cinema!) Here are Technicolor negatives and we notice that the positive colour (the one we see on the screen) is rendered on the negative by its opposite in the spectrum range. Thus a royal-blue image will show on the negative as a light brown. And here is a stainless-steel-and-glass tank like a great aquarium. The negative is fed in at one end. It unwinds and travels under and over a series of rollers, untouched by hand but visible in the dim light. It is automatically sprayed by developer, by fixing solution, by water to cleanse it. It is subjected to hot air and it comes out the other end within forty-five minutes, completed and re-rolled.

Helping Mr. Bevan!

The laboratories are the least publicised and least glamorous part of the film industry but it is a highly important one. Were it not for the painstaking work of the people involved, then cinema proprietors would probably have to supply the customers with sedatives to assuage the pain in stinging eyes, and Mr. Bevan would have an even greater run on spectacles than he has yet let loose.

FOCUS ON FOOTWEAR

by Joy Peake

SHOES only too often do not play as important a part in the general fashion scheme as they certainly should. Although they are subject to the hardest wear they are frequently placed last on the list of accessories.

Good results could well be obtained if more attention were given to footwear details; the newest fashion points should be studied more closely so that shoes are linked up with hat, bag and gloves.

Three or four pairs of shoes of finest workmanship and design are a far better investment than an army of tired-looking specimens, some of which are undoubtedly sale "bargains" bought without careful planning. To add to this sad shoe story—a good pair of shoes can too often be seen worn with the wrong outfit; the shoes are either a bad match, or an ankle-strap type quite unsuitable for wear with a trim suit. Unhappy, too, is the combination of platform-soled sandals or "Wedge Heels" with a very decorative dress. These are correct for beach and sportswear.

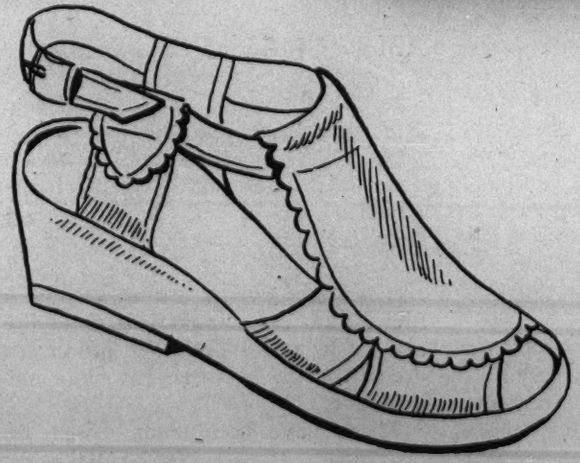
In the photograph on this page attractive sandals are worn by Googie Withers, starring in *Once Upon A Dream.*

The heavy platform soles of a few years ago were the height of hideousness! Fortunately, however, their day was short-lived, although many women needing extra inches clung to this ugly fashion, only to produce a far worse effect of clumsy bulk.

Dolcis have a new selection of the most entrancing styles in sandals, including the "Lagoon" sandals from the Californian range. Watch for these in their special "Blue Lagoon" window displays, made with the co-operation of the Rank Organisation.

The "Lagoon" sandals appear in a variety of lovely pastel shades, and also in red, deep blue, honey, tan and gold; there is a choice of leather or white buck. In the film, Jean Simmons wore the sandal illustrated here; it is in a subtle tone of smoke blue.

Looking to the film actresses for guidance we see, almost invariably, how their shoes harmonise with their clothes for every occasion.



"Lagoon" Sandal from the Dolcis California Range

Filming "A Beautiful Romance"

by Frank Launder

The famous Writer-Director-Producer took his Stars and Production Unit all the way to the South Seas to film in Technicolor 'The Blue Lagoon."

SOME people have said to me: "Why are you making that old story, *The Blue Lagoon*?"

Now it's true those around forty remember it as a rather naughty book they used to read under the desk at school, but then what was considered naughty in those days is accepted in a different and more enlightened spirit to-day. To me, in fact, *The Blue Lagoon* is a delightful romance of two young people wrecked on a desert island.

Perhaps you have often heard the question which is almost routine in any competition—and particularly so in America—as to whom you would like most to be with if marooned on a desert island. The answer to that question has usually been a sentimental "spur of the moment" comment on a personality, but I do not think that anybody has ever gone seriously into the problems which might face two young people if they grew up together alone on a desert island.

If you're not "around forty," and unfamiliar with the story, this is it:

A boy and a girl are wrecked when they are only eight or nine years old and, except for the company of an old Irish sailor for a brief period, they reach the ages of eighteen and nineteen without meeting another single human being.

How Would They Behave?

Now what would be the outlook, psychology, and the reaction of those two young people towards each other and the world in general—or the little they knew of it under those circumstances—is, I think, both problematical and interesting. How would they behave? What would they wear? (I doubt whether they would wear anything, but the censor might disagree with that.) What would they talk about and how much would they remember of the world they left behind as children?

Of course, there is more to the story than that. A couple of beachcombers land on the island. They represent civilisation, the wrong kind of civilisation, and shatter the illusions of the boy and girl. The beachcombers attempt to part them, but as a result they are drawn closer together and fall in love and have a baby.

I will not reveal how the story ends, but it is a simple, sentimental, and, I believe, beautiful story.

I may be wrong, but I think that people have had enough of sophistication and cynicism. The world has moved too fast in the past thirty years and it has tended to harden everybody, superficially that is, for I still believe that, underneath, people cling to the good, the true and the beautiful.

More Outdoor Films Wanted

There is another reason why I wanted to make *The Blue Lagoon*. I think people get a little tired of seeing films made entirely indoors. Even if they do not know the backgrounds are faked, subconsciously they feel that something is wrong. It is impossible to reproduce grand scenery and rolling panoramas in a film studio no matter how good the art work, and I feel that producers do not make half enough films out of doors.

There have been many critics of the policy of going to the South Seas to make a film about the South Seas. It has even been said that a couple of hundred miles from London, in Devonshire or Cornwall for instance, the desired effect could have been obtained with a few property palm trees.

That is just not true. If you want to show the South Seas on the screen with all its true colour and scenic effect, the only place you can do it is in the South Seas.

Early in 1947 we sent a location manager with a Technicolor cameraman out to the South-West Pacific and they searched many thousands of miles until they finally picked on the Yasawa Islands, north of the Fiji Group, as being ideal for all the purposes of the film. Their selection was not made in any haphazard fashion. Weather charts and all kinds of descriptive data were carefully studied before they recommended the Yasawas as the ideal area in which to make the picture.

Consequently, at the beginning of 1948 my production unit, together with Jean Simmons, Noel Purcell and Donald Houston—the young man chosen from over four thousand applicants to play the role opposite Jean—arrived at Suva in the Fiji Islands.

12,000 Miles from Studio!

But before I go on to tell you more about our work in the Pacific, I should like to say here and now that, in the light of our experience and the quality of the material which we have secured, to me there is not a shadow of a doubt that to travel on this location, the longest in the history of motion pictures, since our sphere of operations was 12,000 miles away from our home studio, has been justified both economically and pictorially. The cost of transporta-

tion plus the cost of maintaining the unit in the Fiji Islands was still considerably less than the cost would have been had we attempted to reproduce synthetic backgrounds in the studio.

Before we left England, we had a good deal of difficulty with various aspects of the production. Firstly, as you probably know, we could not find a suitable type of young man to play opposite Jean. Then, when I was almost in despair, Donald Houston turned up and the problem was solved. He made the fifty-first of fifty-two screen tests which I filmed during the course of the competition to find the co-star.

Then, we could not find a suitable ship in which to house the production unit, since we would be operating 200 miles away from the nearest centre of communication and accommodation. That trouble was solved when we chartered two rather small motor-cruisers and made arrangements to set up in the Yasawas themselves a larger base camp than had originally been planned.

"Mad Dogs and Englishmen . ."

When we arrived in the Fijis, there was little opportunity to acclimatise ourselves. We started working straight away. The local people on the main island of Fiji where we began shooting were rather shaken by our activity, and quoted to us the line from the Noel Coward song "Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun." They had reason to contrast their life with ours, for we were up at dawn—usually about 6 o'clock in those areas—and working solidly through the "midday" sun until it set at about 7.30 in the evening.

After we had filmed some ship scenes around Suva, the capital of the Fijis, we moved to a village called Sigatoka, about 85 miles away. It was there that the fun and games began. If ever you hear anybody commenting "What a holiday those people must have had making *The Blue Lagoon,*" read this and disillusion them immediately. It was far from being a holiday. At Sigatoka, we filmed what I lightly termed in the script "picturesque shots of coral reef and life-boat." That reef might have looked picturesque, but it was definitely hostile.

We stood in the water for hours. We fought the breakers on the reef itself until we were practically exhausted and very badly knocked about by the camera punt which the surf threw in all directions. Somebody had had the brainwave of equipping the punt with a tree trunk out-rigger for steadiness. The out-rigger certainly steadied the punt, but it made it completely unmanoeuvrable and whenever we tried to unship the camera from its coral platform, the surf made a shambles of the whole business. Often the punt was thrown fifteen feet back on the coral reef and the crew were left nursing coral cuts or swimming frantically for safety. Noel Purcell, who had the unenviable job of rowing a life-boat through a boiling gap in the reef, thought a lot about safety too, particularly with a shark's dorsal fin stalking him through the gap!

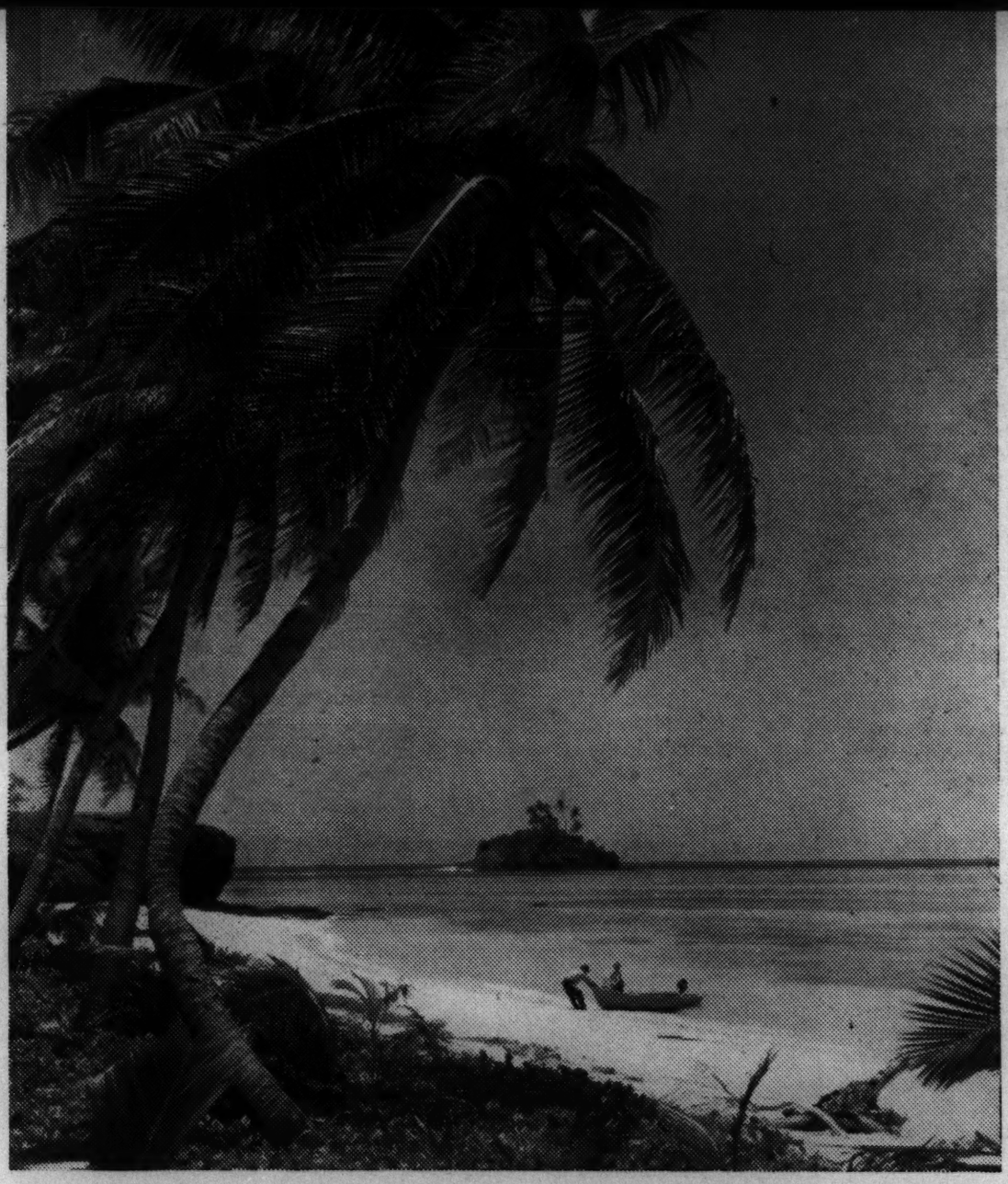
Like First-Aid Station

Every night we were at Sigatoka, the little hotel into which the unit was crammed, looked more like a first-aid station. Almost every member of the unit sported a bandage somewhere or nursed sun blisters or swollen ankles. If you have ever stood ankle- or knee-deep in salt water under a vertical tropical sun for twelve hours at a time, you can sympathise with us.

With those reef shots at last "in the can," we set out for the Yasawa Islands where the bulk of our work was done.

We left Viti Levu, the main island of the Fiji Group and, incidentally, civilisation, from Lautoka, a port on the northern coast of Viti Levu. Our two motor-cruisers—the "Viking Ahoy" and the "Royal Flight"—were loaded with equipment and personnel and, in the capable hands of Captain Giblin—a sea pilot born and bred in the South Seas—we set sail for our main base camp. This voyage took us across Bligh Water, so named because the notorious Captain Bligh of "Bounty" fame discovered the majority of the Fiji

A characteristic study of Frank Launder on the set of "The Blue Lagoon," directing a difficult scene. Mr. Launder is also the president of the Screenwriters' Association.



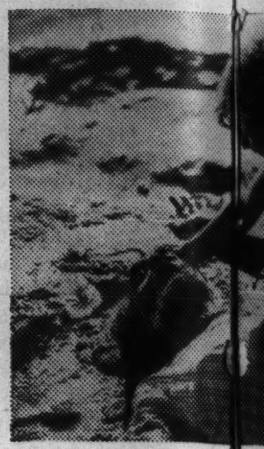
After hours of weary rowing through the foggy night, the morning sun lifts the veil of mist, and Paddy and the children, Michael and Emmeline, reach the beaches of Blue Lagoon Island.

A ship bound for Australia catches fire and is blown up. Two children, Michael Reynolds and Emmeline Foster, are rescued by Paddy Button, a kind old Irish sailor. During the night their dinghy drifts towards a small Pacific island. In a cave on the island the castaways find an old hut and a keg of rum. Unfortunately, however, drink has always been Paddy's besetting sin. And here it causes his death ; drunkenly he falls over a cliff.

From then onwards Michael has to take Paddy's place. Time passes. At 20 Michael is adept with the spear and equally at home on land and sea. Emmeline becomes a beautiful young woman with long dark hair flowing over her bronzed shoulders.

During idle hours Michael dives for oysters. The pearls he gives to Emmeline to wear in her hair, or to make into a necklace. Neither of them realises the value of the "beads" until two unscrupulous renegades, Dr. Murdoch and Jimmy Carter, arrive on the island. In their greed Murdoch and Carter kill each other. Michael succeeds in rescuing Emmeline from the rogues' schooner, where Carter had lured her. Finding a book dealing with marriage they enact their own version of the marriage ceremony and declare themselves man and wife.

One night, while a hurricane lashes the island, Emmeline's baby is born. They call it Paddy, and decide that for the sake of the baby they must attempt the return to the world they themselves scarcely remember. Michael refits their boat from the bark of trees, and Emmeline manages to make a sail. And in the year 1917 they leave Blue Lagoon Island for the world beyond the horizon.



"I'll look aft
assures Em

Se
The B

Emmeline Foster - Je Si
Emmeline Foster - Su n S
(as a child)
Paddy Button - el
Jam C

Directed by Frank Launder
An Indiv l

Eagerly the
have seen fo
Ca

ok after you, Emm." The young Michael Emmeline after Paddy has fallen to his death over a cliff edge.

As the years pass, Emmeline grows up into a very lovely young woman, and Michael becomes a strong, agile man.

Scenes from Blue Lagoon

THE CAST

er - Jean Simmons	Michael Reynolds - Donald Houston
er - Susan Stranks	Michael Reynolds - Peter Jones (as a child)
- Noel Purcell	Dr. Murdoch James Hayter
James Carter -	Cyril Cusack

From the novel by H. de Vere Stacpoole

Launder An Individual Picture (Gilliat-Launder Production)

After the fringe of a real hurricane has swept over the Yasawa Islands, Jean Simmons and Donald Houston examine the damage.

erly they question the first white men they seen for years—Dr. Murdoch and James Carter, fugitives from justice.

After the birth of their baby, Michael and Emmeline repair their boat and sail away to the civilisation they but dimly remember.

Filming a Beautiful Romance

Continued from page 9

Islands. He also called at the Yasawas during his famous voyage in an open boat, but he was driven away by hostile canoes.

Giblin guided us cautiously across the water, often with raging white reef surf on both sides of our convoy. There were sudden stops and course alterations due to "niggers' heads" — mushroom-like pinnacles of coral reaching from the sea bed to a couple of feet beneath the surface. Look-outs posted by Giblin reported them to him when they saw the dark blue of the sea change to a light colour.

The Native Village

Our base camp had been set up in advance at a native village called Tamasua and it looked very pleasant when we arrived. Tents and native huts were spaced on a lawn-like patch of grass reaching down from among the palm trees to the golden sand of the beach. In the centre of the lawn stood an old stone building which the chiefs of the Yasawa tribes had once used as a meeting place. That stone building proved a god-send to us, when, the day after we arrived, the south-west trade-wind began to surge up to gale force.

It was Jean Simmons' birthday and the natives put on an impressive celebration party at which, incidentally, they added the "Conga" to their list of tribal dances.

For a couple of days the wind mounted and then the fringe of a hurricane dragged itself over our islands. I had written a hurricane into the script and had been hoping our luck would actually bring us one. It did . . . but it was a good deal more than we bargained for.

Filming the Hurricane

We filmed the angry seas and swaying palm trees until the camera tripod could stand against the wind no longer. The camera crew were literally lashed by sand and spray, flying horizontally. From time to time we had to give it up when the wind became too strong and the beach too dangerous, with coconuts, palm leaves and bits of trees flying through the air. Then we withdrew to the comparative safety of the stone building in which all the unit huddled together wet through, and, later on, without bread, potatoes, cigarettes or liquor. In seven days the worst was over and the supply ship reached us at last bringing fresh food and fresh supplies.

From then on it was again a story of working from sunrise to sunset, but under conditions very much worse than those we had met in Sigatoka. We soon exhausted the range of camera set-ups in the immediate vicinity of Tamasua and I took the unit in the motor-cruisers out and about among the islands.

Tropical Sunset—And Other Things!

Briefly, our daily routine became this:—

Out of bed—"bed," in this instance is a rather flattering term since only a few of us were lucky enough to have one of the limited supply of mattresses, others curled up on the deck or on the cabin floor—at 5 a.m., then load equipment and get ashore. The word "get" covers a variety of methods by which land-lubbers scramble from sea to shore. Once through the surf, our safari formed up with the native bearers and marched along the sand often for a couple of miles until we reached a spot suitable for a camera set-up. The two miles usually included climbing cliffs, scrambling over rocks, wading or swimming across bays or over creeks. Having finished that particular shot, we hacked our way through the jungle undergrowth to either another bay or an inland set-up. Lunch arrived in picnic form from the motor-cruisers. (Bildew, our Indian cook, claimed to be the best rough-weather cook in the Pacific and he certainly earned the title.) After lunch, we carried on with the struggle and usually returned to somewhere near our ships to prepare for sunset filming. A tropical sunset is one of the few truisms in the list of much-boosted features of the glamorous South Seas. Afterwards, dinner in one of the ships and then the conference—often until midnight—to discuss the next day's work.

This routine went on every day of the week, Saturdays and Sundays included, and if it sounds easy to you, then throw in mosquitoes, sand-flies, sharks, barracudas, conger-eels, giant clams, water-snakes, land-snakes, torrential downpours, poison coral, coconut-crabs, land-crabs, flying foxes, hornets, dampness, wet clothes, wet bedding, rocking ships, thunder, lightning and wind, and you have a short list of additional complications.

"Rushes" in London

There was yet another major difficulty throughout our eight weeks actual filming in the islands. We did not see a foot of exposed film to judge our own results! And that, as any director will tell you, is about the greatest handicap under which a film can be made. Our film was flown back to England, either via Australia or America.

In London, my partner, Sidney Gilliat, viewed the "rushes," although he himself was fully occupied making the film version of Norman Collins' best-selling novel, "London Belongs To Me." He cabled his comments back to me and in consultation with Geoffrey Unsworth, our director of photography, I varied our operations according to the contents of those cables.

When we returned to England, the work of matching up, in the studio, those shots filmed in the Fijis, began.

Matching up is no easy business, but, at least, the circumstances under which it was carried out were a little more comfortable!

Vienna's First Lady of the Screen

Frau Hedwig Bleibtreu, Austria's oldest actress and first lady of the stage, recently celebrated her eightieth birthday. She has just made her very first trip to England for her part in the Carol Reed film, The Third Man. *She has already appeared in the exterior scenes filmed in Vienna.*

Frau Hedwig Bleibtreu was born in Linz, made her first stage appearance at the age of four. She was given a life contract at the famous Vienna Burg Theatre, an honour accorded to less than six people in the long history of the stage. For fifty-one years she occupied the same dressing-room. In her distinguished career she has played nearly 300 different roles.

What is Specialised Cinema ?

by E. MAI HARRIS

IN film papers of to-day and among certain sections of the film-going public, the expression "specialised cinema" is becoming quite commonplace. But how many of those who use it know exactly what it stands for, or even why it came into being? To most cinema-goers it probably means nothing at all, and to many of the rest it just vaguely embraces the little cinemas in the West End of London which show foreign-language films.

It is, however, quite wrong to call every foreign-language film shown over here "specialised." I would, indeed, go even further and say that the majority are merely normal entertainment films in their own countries. Their only "speciality" —if I may call it so—is that the sound track is not recorded in the English tongue. This fact—even though, because they are picked films, they are often better directed and better acted than most of the films generally released in this country—commonly gives rise to the supposition that they do not possess the same sure appeal for audiences as the average English or American film. It is therefore only the exceptional cinema management that has imagination and courage enough to give them screen space. Because of this and because, too, every showing of a Continental picture may help a little in promoting international understanding, these films have a modest function to fulfil within the framework of the specialised cinemas.

Like the Classics

But the specialised cinema itself has a much wider field to cover and an even more important function to fulfil. It should stand in the world of film in much the same relation as the classics—or the book that earns the qualification of literature—to the best-seller. The true specialised cinema is a pioneer theatre welcoming both the experimental in film and

A Director of the Academy Cinema, Mai Harris is one of our foremost authorities on the Specialised Cinema.

the film that succeeds in reaching the place of Art, no matter where those particular films were actually made. It is evident that a theatre with such a policy cannot look for quick profits, and must indeed expect many films to be failures from the box-office point of view. But in the long run such a policy will triumph. This is not a rash statement; it is a proved fact to which witness is borne by the success of cinemas such as the Academy, the Curzon and Studio One in London, and the Cosmo in Glasgow. Of these, perhaps, the first and the last go farthest in proving this contention. Apart from the truly experimental Continental films that have been shown in this country, such as *Paisa, Farrebique, Hortobagy, Zero de Conduite, Atalante,* etc., the Academy Cinema has already seized the opportunity of giving premier runs to unusual or experimental English and American films like, for example, *Children on Trial, Our Country, The Forgotten Village* and *Tobacco Road,* which originally were denied a commercial showing. In Glasgow the Cosmo cinema has shown that the ordinary provincial audience is indeed eager to see English films that offer more than the usual mixture of boy meets girl. Its success is in direct contradiction to the experience of many, if not most, ordinary provincial cinemas. Why? There is a very real reason. The Cosmo is one of the specialised cinemas; that is to say, a cinema which caters for the highest, not the lowest, tastes. Its audiences have learned to expect a certain level of entertainment, and so are not disappointed when they get it. This is not a joke: if an audience is spoon-fed for months and years with a nauseating mixture designed to make big commercial returns on a more-or-less factory system, it will either become so jaded that it cannot take any more and seeks its amusement elsewhere, or it simply reaches a stage where no demand at all must be made upon its brain. If and when this happens, disillusionment and failure must follow. The most significant comment upon this situation comes from the Rank Organisation itself. The presentation of *Henry V* at the Glasgow Odeon was a complete failure. But on its revival at the Cosmo, its success was so great that this cinema was given the premier run of *Hamlet* in preference to the Odeon—and again was extraordinarily successful. Surely there has never been a clearer demonstration of the need for a vastly greater number of specialised cinemas in the provinces.

Beacon of Hope

The argument that film is an industry and not an art, so often put forward as an excuse for bad films, is a lame one. After all, the theatre has also always primarily been a means of livelihood for authors, actors, managers and backers. But that has not prevented masterpieces being written for it or enacted upon it. Generally speaking, film has still a long way to go before it can make a like claim. Perhaps it may never be able to do so. One thing only is certain: its producers, directors and authors who are eager to experiment and improve upon the existing level of film entertainment must have the necessary outlet to the public and the public must be given the chance to cultivate its palate. That is where the specialised cinema comes in, and why, to those who believe that film has a really vital part to play in the modern world, it is a beacon of hope and one of the most important developments in film to-day.

The Editor renews his acquaintance with

JEAN SIMMONS

The Star of "The Blue Lagoon" is perhaps the most talented of our younger film actresses.

IT was on the set of *The Way to The Stars* that I first met Jean Simmons. She was barely sixteen then, and she looked much younger; those of you who saw the film will doubtless recall the little girl who sang "Let Him Go, Let Him Tarry." That was four years ago. Since then Jean has appeared in the following films:—

Great Expectations; Hungry Hill; Black Narcissus; Uncle Silas; The Woman in the Hall; and, opposite the greatest actor of our time, Sir Laurence Olivier, as Ophelia in *Hamlet.* Now, you can see her in *The Blue Lagoon,* and, very shortly, in her first "grown up" role—with Stewart Granger in Two Cities' *Adam and Evelyne.*

On the set of Two Cities' "ADAM AND EVELYNE."

The Editor, Robert Hirst, enjoys a joke with regular "Film Monthly Review" reader Jean Simmons, starring, in her first "grown up" role, with Stewart Granger. (Photographed by Ian Jeayes.)

And Jean's location trip to the South Seas, for the filming in Technicolor of *The Blue Lagoon,* gave her the opportunity to visit and make personal appearances in France, Italy, Egypt, Iran, India, Malay, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies, Australia, Fiji, Hollywood, New York, and a number of other places. Consequently, as I journeyed up to Denham, where *Adam and Evelyne* was being filmed, I couldn't help wondering whether all this success had gone to Jean's head. For, unlike so many of our famous stars, Jean has never experienced the hard, character-forming training of provincial repertory. She has never known what it means to work day and night for a few pounds a week, to live in cheap digs., to be forever packing suitcases, and to exist, not infrequently, solely on cups of coffee.

Born with Great Talent

However, within a few moments of renewing my acquaintance with her, I knew that Jean had not changed; here was the singer of "Let Him Go, Let Him Tarry." Jean Simmons had grown up, of course; she was a little more poised, her features were a little more finely shaped; but withal she was still the same friendly, unaffected, charming girl. In fact, I doubt whether I have ever met anyone with so completely natural a manner. And this was not just the pose of a skilful actress; directors and cameramen are unanimous in their praise of her ability to be perfectly natural on the set. As one brilliant cameraman, Bob Krasker, once said, "She has the gift of forgetting all about the camera." Jean has the affection of all the studio technicians; they tell me that she always takes an intelligent interest in their work.

And although a celebrated actor,

watching Jean act in a very difficult scene in *Hamlet*, remarked, "She was born with something it took me fifteen years to learn," Jean really does have to work hard at her roles.

"I read the script several times, to make sure I know the story and how the characters are related. Then I begin to imagine how the girl I am playing would act and speak. Before I go on the set I like to be alone, so that I can really get into my part."

South Sea Island Discomfort

I pestered Jean with questions about her experiences in the States, and here, in her own words, is what she told me :—

"After the primitive conditions in the South Seas I became almost a luxury-worshipping materialist. I just couldn't help it. After washing for three months in a canvas booth, on board a motor-cruiser, the discovery of the American bathroom was enough to throw anyone off balance. Of course, Fiji is romantic, but it just happens to be more comfortable at a distance. Looking at it on the cinema screen, you get the romance without the itching scalp!

"The first person I met at San Francisco airport was my eldest sister, Edna—she married a G.I. in Britain. I had no idea she would come all the way from Boston to meet me. I don't know why, but I threw my arms around her and cried —and I had to face the Press photographers tear-stained!

Meeting with Cecil B. de Mille

"At Paramount Studios I met Cecil B. de Mille. He wanted me to play Delilah in his new film, *Samson and Delilah*. As I was not sure what plans Mr. Rank had for me in the future, I had to exercise my new-found diplomacy. This wasn't exactly easy in the presence of the legendary Mr. de Mille, who started off disarmingly by saying that he wanted *my* reactions and that if they were favourable he would undertake to talk to Mr. Rank. After that he showed me a picture of a very lush-looking girl in a dress that was practically non-existent above the waist, and said he wanted Delilah to look like that, adding, as an afterthought, that it was possible that the costume would have to be a little different. I managed to smile a good deal and said the idea seemed very nice. But I didn't actually commit myself.

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"At Ciro's night club I danced with Mickey Rooney—never felt so tall in my life!

"I had dinner at Romanoff's and met Prince Romanoff—a very colourful character. I gather he is not really a prince, but he plays the part so well that everybody treats him like one.

On Giving Speeches

"As official receiver of any award due to any member of the Rank Organisation, I was booked to attend the Academy Awards Presentation. I carefully rehearsed a short speech of acceptance, but I was terribly afraid I would trip up at the crucial moment, as I always did in Australia when attending any important function. Don Houston used to say that my centre of gravity must be in the wrong place! Incidentally, Don is a fine actor with an irrepressible personality. In fact, it was his sense of humour and the patient way he put up with everything that helped us to see the funny side when things began to go wrong, or our Spartan way of life frayed our nerves and tempers.

"To get back to the award—first we had dinner at Walter Wanger's, also attended by Susan Hayward and Joan Bennett, then to the Shrine Auditorium, and the big moment. Jack Cardiff was named for the year's best colour photography in *Black Narcissus* and I made my entrance. The speech seemed to go off all right, but, to my consternation, five other awards followed—I was left high and dry without a single word to utter! Still, somehow I managed to keep on my feet.

"In New York, while we were going up on the lift in the Empire State Building we got to talking about the time the cables broke and I suddenly felt quite ill.

"Yes, I was glad to get back home, but I would like to go back to America again soon—maybe incognito, so that I could browse around the shops at my own speed. And next time I *will* look at the Statue of Liberty—last time I was curled up in my cabin, exhausted!"

Humility

Perhaps one of Jean's most endearing traits is her utter humility as an actress—her sincere admiration for other, more experienced, artists. She herself is not satisfied with just being a screen star; for some considerable time she had been looking for a part in a stage play. When you read this, Jean will be appearing with Stewart Granger in Tolstoy's "The Power of Darkness." In order to accept this role she had to decline a big Hollywood offer—as co-star with Tyrone Power. Jean has never before appeared on the stage; and her role in this particular play is even more exacting than her Ophelia in the film *Hamlet*.

Jean confessed that she was "terrified." However, I'm sure she will soon overcome this initial fear; and when she does, I am confident that her career on the stage will be even more successful than it has been on the screen. For Jean Simmons has the qualities that make for greatness in an actress, whatever the medium of expression she may care to choose.

THE FILMS DIVISION OF THE C.O.I.

by PHILIP MACKIE

SOMETHING like twenty years ago, a young Scotsman called John Grierson coined the word "documentary" (as stated in the February "Film Monthly Review"), and then demonstrated what he meant by making *Drifters*.

Nowadays, greyer about the head but shooting off ideas and orders as pyrotechnically as ever, Grierson is head of the Government film service, as Controller (Films) of the Central Office of Information.

Millions of feet of celluloid have passed through movieolas since the idea was first conceived of using films in the public service. Other countries have taken the idea and shaped it to their own particular needs. Here, there has been growth and development and change.

In the Past

You have to know the past to understand the present. If you look back over the twenty years, it's pretty easy to recognise the three main periods of documentary film-making in Britain.

The first, up to 1939, was the period of learning and testing. Young men, brilliant or earnest or just plain film-struck, learned the trade of making films that were information and art as well. Grierson's unit, at the Empire Marketing Board and then at the G.P.O., produced films that served important tasks of public relations—films like *Song of Ceylon, Men of Two Worlds, North Sea,* and *Night Mail.* Other Government departments and industrial sponsors took up the idea. But, in general, money was tight and the whole operation was smallish.

The War

Then the war came, and the second period was a time of expansion and opportunity. Fumblingly at first, then more certainly, Films Division of the Ministry of Information set about using films in the service of the nation. It called in the documentary film-makers, and worked them for all they were worth. Money was tight no longer. A great body of films was produced, ranging from epics like *Western Approaches* to simple instructionals on how to cook fish. Despite the range, there was unity, because the war gave everything unity: everything was in aid of the common cause.

The Peace

The third period is now, now that war-time M.O.I. has become peace-time C.O.I., with different powers and different tasks.

The take-over took place one day early in 1946; but there were no outward signs of revolution that day, and the real nature of the change was not immediately apparent.

Indeed, if you take a quick look at the surface, there hardly seems to be a change at all. This last year, C.O.I. produced 200-odd reels of film—as many as M.O.I. ever did, and in fact rather more. The films were made by much the same units that M.O.I. used, and were distributed in much the same way.

Artistically, and commercially as well, C.O.I. has not lost ground. 1948 didn't throw up any epics, but 29 of its films were sold to the cinemas, in addition to 12 ten-minute films distributed free and three dozen one-minute "trailers." And films like *Voices of Malaya, Gates of Power, Steps of the Ballet, A Yank Comes Back* and *Waverley Steps* are worth going to see, however bad the first feature is.

Where's the change, then?

In the first place, there's no longer a war on. There is no longer a single cause, a simple unswerving line for the information services to follow. The business of government was always complex, but now it is more than ever so. C.O.I. has the hard task of interpreting complexities, making difficult things intelligible.

Secondly, M.O.I. was a Ministry, and C.O.I. is not. M.O.I. made policy, and produced films in line with that policy. C.O.I., by its constitution, is not a king but a Grand Vizier. Its job is to advise and to execute, to make and show films that the various Ministries want made and shown.

Thirdly, money is getting tight again. In a war costing millions a day, millions an hour almost, a few thousands this way or that spent on films didn't make much difference. Now, in this peace of stringent economy and high taxation, the Government has to think hard before it decides to spend so many thousands of the taxpayers' money on this film or that film.

Power of the Film

This last factor bumps into another factor going the other way. Government departments have learned to appreciate the proper use of films, have found out by experience the purposes that films can serve in education, instruction, information. They want to use this powerful medium and use it well.

The relation between purpose and cost raises some nice problems. Is it worth (say) £400 to make a "trailer" telling parents to immunise their children against diphtheria? It will remind some, warn others. It may well save lives. Answer, then —yes, it's worth it.

But try something more difficult. How many thousands of pounds is it worth to make a first-class prestige film, to be shown overseas, on the subject of (let us say) British democracy? There's no text-book answer to that question.

Diversity of Purpose

Let me list at random some of the

Finding Their "Souls"

MORE film stars than ever these days are making excursions to the stage to get to grips with their "souls." Don't misunderstand me. I'm not implying that film stars don't act. What they don't get is the opportunity of building up character without interruption. It's a two-minute take here, a three-minute take there, and now, of course, we also have the Hitchcock long-take as seen in *Rope,* which will give the better actors more scope.

Actress who confirmed this for me is *Googie Withers,* who has just completed five films one after another, latest being *Traveller's Joy,* and is now off to the stage for the good of her soul. "I'll be making a picture again towards the end of the year," she said, "meanwhile I hope to accompany hubby *John McCallum* to Austria where he is to appear in location shots of *Maria Chapdelaine.* While he's working, I'll have a holiday."

"Dash for the Louvre"

Dickie Attenborough tells me that he is now going over the script for his part in the Borstal picture called *Boys In Brown.* He's also on the stage at present and will practically be working day and night once he starts filming. After the picture, Dickie and wife *Sheila Sim* hope to holiday in Paris for a week. "Never been to Paris before," said Dickie. "As soon as we arrive I'm making a dash for the Louvre. I'm very interested in impressionistic painting." At the moment, because of work, Dickie and Sheila see very little of each other. On week-ends they go to cheer favourite football club Chelsea, check their football pools, answer their mail, listen to records, and take a "complete rest."

For Home Consumption

When many film producers are quibbling about the high costs of making pictures, it is worth while noting remarks of film producer *John Argyle,* whose first independent production, *The Case of Charles Peace,* is to be screened sometime in April or May. "All our pictures will have a special British appeal," explained John, "and they will be made on a budget which will enable us to show a profit in Britain." Next production of John's is *The Girl Who Couldn't Quite,* which promises to keep you guessing and laughing. John has launched many of our present-day stars, among whom can be included Maureen O'Hara, Sally Ann Howes, Michael Rennie and Stewart Granger.

Around and About

with

LOU CRANSTON

Prefers Real Working-Class Atmosphere

Ever spoken to Mrs. Huggett? I just did. Kathleen Harrison who plays the part in the Huggett series tells me she is just getting down to work for her part in the fourth in the series, *Huggett's Christmas Party,* which should be screened by the end of this year. Asked what she thought of the series, Kathleen said: "I would have preferred the setting to be in a real London working-class street instead of in a suburb. It would lend more colour to the picture." What she would like to do is a Huggett picture showing how she first met Mr. Huggett who is, of course, "blue pencil" Jack Warner. Ambition of Kathleen is to appear as Mrs. Jones in a film of John Galsworthy's "Silver Box," should it ever be made. "I did this once on the stage," recalled Kathleen, "when I was a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Charles Laughton played Mr. Jones." Seems a good idea to me. Any willing producers? Going! Going! . . .

For Korda?

Ten to one *Glynis John's* next picture will be a Korda production. Hadn't much time to say anything when I asked her about future plans. She had to dash to keep a dinner date with Sir Alexander. "I've just finished my part in *Mr. Prohack,*" she said quickly, "Let you know in a couple of weeks what I'm doing . . . 'bye." That's Glynis that was . . .

---

purposes for which C.O.I. can, and is, making films:—

Informational films for general showing, giving in coherent terms the facts about the nation's economic situation.

Educational films for schools, bringing the world into the classroom, making history, geography, civics live on the screen.

Medical films for doctors, demonstrating a particular operation or teaching the diagnosis of a disease.

Films showing British achievements and British progress to audiences all over the world.

Films selling British goods abroad, taking a particular industry and showing the high skill and craftsmanship that go to make the pottery or cutlery or clothes.

Training films for specialised groups—for instance, films for G.P.O. engineers, showing how to plumb and joint a telephone cable.

Films recording scientific progress—in radar, in aircraft design, in supersonic experiments.

Films bringing fundamental education to African peoples.

That's only the start of the list.

Public Service

A diversity of purposes, then, some necessarily competing with others for a fair share of the available money and talent. Limited money and limited powers. Tasks that are difficult and perhaps seem humdrum, especially after the war—which, whatever it may have been for you, was a paradise for the movie camera.

Look at it the other way, though. A number of important and exacting tasks, which nothing can do so well as the film. And an overriding conception of using films usefully in the service of the public.

The problem facing John Grierson and Films Division is how, with all this on their hands, to maintain a unified and coherent film service. It's a big job, but then, 1929 is some time ago now, and the size of the job is a measure of how much ground has been travelled these last twenty years.

HISTORY and the FILM

Far better than any text-book, the Palestinian film, "My Father's House," will provide future generations with a vivid record of a people's struggle, and the realisation of their hopes.

by L. E. Kochan

MY *FATHER'S HOUSE,* a film about Palestine, is the first full-length picture to be made in that troubled land. Perhaps a short description of it will help us to understand some recent happenings.

The theme is a very simple one. Some desperate Jewish immigrants illegally land on the shores of the Holy Land, and gradually they are absorbed into the every-day life of the inhabitants. The dialogue of *My Father's House* is in English; but this film is as essentially Jewish as the fine British war-time pictures like *Western Approaches, The Way to the Stars,* and Noel Coward's *In Which We Serve* were essentially British. For the technique of documentary truth sharpened by artistic treatment was used here too. We see—from the time the immigrants land to when they settle down in their new homes—history itself in the making; and future generations will find this record of far more value than any mere text-book description.

For although the characters in this film are individuals, it is the tragedies of millions that they symbolise. The girl Martha who cannot wipe out her memory of the past, who can never forget the husband and child murdered in a concentration camp. The little boy David, pathetically wandering from town to town, from village to village, searching for his parents, already dead. We read in our newspapers that the German fascists slaughtered six million Jews; here, we learn a little of what that means in terms of human misery.

There are also many minor characters, and these serve to show the wide variety of physical types that form the population of Israel.

Watching this film we are taken on a fascinating journey around the Holy Land—into its mountains, along its coast, into its towns, both old and new. But more than that, this film captures the atmosphere of Israel: the feverish haste of the pioneers as they build a new settlement; the indestructible streets of Old Jerusalem; the traditional celebrations; the memorable night when the settlers dance around the camp-fire; these are scenes that show how vigorous is the new life springing up everywhere.

And always there is the sunny atmosphere of the East, giving to the open-air scenes a kind of sculptural beauty. Nowhere is this so effective as in the final scene. For here—being built with the passionate love of people who know, after years of horror and degradation, what it really means to be free—is a new colony, a new home. And the hastily-erected water-tower stands boldly silhouetted against the sky—a symbol of hope for the years to come.

On arrival at the camp, the doctor examines the brand made on Martha's arm in the concentration camp during the war. This is a grim reminder of the life she left behind in Europe.

Book Guide

FIFTY YEARS OF GERMAN FILM

By H. H. Wollenberg

(Falcon Press, 12s. 6d.)

A book that gives an interesting survey of the most important and successful German films, producers, directors and actors in the first half of the century. It is published in a series called "The National Cinema Series" which will show the different national styles of the artistic film, contrasted with certain purely commercial American "mass-produced goods." However, before coming to the artistic part, Mr. Wollenberg—once *the* best-informed Berlin film-journal editor—gives a most informative list of data relating to the rapid growth of the German film companies, their studios, distributing agencies, etc. At the "height" of the Weimar Republic, about 1929, Germany had 424 producing companies and 118 distributing companies. Most of the leading actors and directors were at once snatched away by Hollywood, to mention only Marlene Dietrich and Ernst Lubitsch.

The illustrations in this well-produced volume show the "national" touch of many (not all!!!) German films, such as is manifest also in German plays and operas. A preference for the romantic, fantastic, gigantic, warlike and—pathological eccentric. This rather Teutonic style is truly preserved in films like *Westfront* (1918), *Hitlerjunge Quex, Dr. Mabuse, Spies, The Nibelungs, The Blue Light, The Golem, Faust, Grieshun's Chronicle, Student of Prague* and especially in the nerve-racking, eccentric horror-phantasy, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari.*

Many German films do *not* belong to the national style, but are of a more "cosmopolitan" character, such as *Madam Dubarry* (1918) and *The Blue Angel* (1930). Anyway, the author has done a good job as a critic and film historian. F. HEYMANN.

FILM SCRIPT

By Adrian Brunel

(Burke Publishing Co., 10s. 6d.)

Adrian Brunel, himself a film maker of outstanding integrity, has written what is, in my opinion, the best book, to date, on the technique of writing for the screen. The various camera positions are all very well demonstrated by stills. And there are excerpts from actual film scripts, and a technical dictionary.

INFORMATIONAL FILM YEAR BOOK, 1948

(Albyn Press, 12s. 6d.)

An extremely useful book to all who are interested in the various sides of documentary film-making. Contains some very good articles by Sinclair Road, Edna Urquhart, Edgar Anstey, Paul Zils and others. A special feature is the list of international organisations, quite definitely the fullest yet available anywhere. Many of the stills are very beautiful.

WINCHESTER'S SCREEN ENCYCLOPEDIA

Edited by Maud M. Miller

(Winchester Publications, 21s.)

By far the best reference book on the film. And not only is it invaluable to the serious student of the cinema; it also contains everything that any film-lover could possibly wish to know. Besides the reference sections, which seem to cover the whole film world, there are authoritative articles by many famous people directly connected with the industry. Exceptional value. If you yourself cannot afford it, make sure that your public library has one on its shelves.

THE BRITISH FILM ANNUAL

(Winchester Publications, 10s. 6d.)

This annual contains lavishly illustrated records of 54 British films released in 1948. Many full-page colour plates and biographies of stars and leading players. Very good value.

FROM SCRIPT TO SCREEN

By Bruce Woodhouse

(Winchester Publications, 12s. 6d.)

Mr. Woodhouse explains, simply and clearly, the many different aspects of film making. The book is well illustrated with many fine stills. And there is an excerpt from a film script. I strongly recommend this book to all who are interested in learning how films are made.

FRANK COURTENAY.

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